

Lunch allowances for five

PROSPECT -- Lunch allowances for five employes of the Highway section crew here were paid as a result of a group grievance initiated by OSEA Job Representative Gordon McCoy.

Kenneth Twidwell, Robert Conger, Steve Nordman, Grady Mott and McCoy all were required to attend a conference on diesel truck operation and maintenance in October 1977 held in Central Point and Medford. Despite the distance they had to travel each day, they were denied a meal allowance as required by Article 28 of the central agreement.

Highway Department labor relations head Gene Huntley, in a letter to OSEA Employee Representative Gordon Webb, acknowledged that the denial probably was due to a "lack of communication or misunderstanding" and paid the five men their allowances.

Work space certificates returned

Two chapters and one individual have returned their work space certificates to OSEA headquarters without redeeming them.

Chapters 31 and 28 and retired member Laurence Patrick of Springfield donated their work space certificates to headquarters.

A few years ago, to help finance construction of the present headquarters, OSEA issued what have been called work space certificates to OSEA chapters and members. The work space certificates matured in five years and earned six per cent interest annually.

The action taken by the two chapters and Patrick means that the Association may keep the money spent to buy the work space certificate and that OSEA no longer has an obligation to pay any more interest.

In a similar action, OSEA Chapter 41 has returned the interest it has earned from its work space certificate to the Association.

Marion County dispute goes to the factfinder

Portland fact finder Geoff Neill heard presentations by OSEA and Marion County Jan. 9, in the contract dispute between the county and its 200-plus-member Marion County Employees Association (MCEA/OSEA).

OSEA Associate General Counsel Charlene Sherwood, Education and Research Director John Lund, Employee Representative Gordon Webb and MCEA/OSEA member Ron Seely presented the employee positions.

Fact finding was invoked when the Marion County Commissioners rejected the proposal presented by their negotiators Eric Carlson, county personnel director, and



The OSU grievance committee (from left) Bob Gourley; John Lund, OSEA education and research director; Les French; Ken Stueve; Thelma Evans; and Rita Johnson.

Grievance committees 'wave of the future'

"The wave of the future." That is how John Lund, OSEA director of education and research, describes the grievance committee system that has been set up in several OSEA units, including his program at Oregon State University.

There are several advantages in using the system according to Lund. "It encourages settling problems at the lowest level, it provides for a sharing of ideas and it helps insure that the grievances that are filed are well-written and well-documented," he says.

The procedure works like this: A grievance committee made-up of job reps and the staff employe rep assigned to that jurisdiction meets once a month to deal with employe problems.

An employe who has a problem can go to the group with it or contact his or her job rep who gets the information and presents it to the committee.

The group then discusses the problem and possible solutions and decides whether to file a formal grievance or recommend an alternative course.

Although new to OSEA, the grievance committee concept has wide acceptance in the private sector. The key to its success is the job reps.

According to Lund, "If they're out there doing their jobs, the whole process works smoothly. At OSU they're fantastic. They know what's going on in the work place, they know what's in the contract and they're not afraid of management."

A principal tool used by the grievance committee is the grievance log, a listing of problems brought to the committee, complete with dates, general circumstances and disposition.

It is a handy source of information about where the problems are, how they are getting solved and what needs to be changed, either at the bargaining table or in the way OSEA and individual employes deal with management.

This exchange of information also provides a forum for employes and the employe rep to help each other and learn from each other. According to Lund, "The sharing of experiences makes them more effective in dealing with problems in the work place."

The monthly meetings also provide an opportunity for the employe rep to get a better handle on what is happening at the local level and bring the job reps up-to-date on issues handled by the headquarters staff that affect them.

At a recent meeting of the OSU committee, topics included membership improvement, fair share, per diem, flex time, overtime and evaluations in addition to current grievances.

A similar type of grievance committee has been in operation for nearly two years at the University of Oregon Health Sciences Center in Portland. It utilizes the team concept with five teams of job reps designated geographically with the team leader serving on the grievance committee.

The system, which is constantly being refined, encourages resolution of problems at the local level by local people. Grievances are filed by job reps, who usually also handle them through the second (department head) step. When they reach the third level, the committee takes over.

"This gives the committee an opportunity to compare grievances, consolidate them if necessary and collectively determine the best way to deal

with the issues," according to Bud Bailey, who developed the system.

The system also means that less of Bailey's time is spent dealing with lower level grievances, leaving him free to work in other areas. "The average grievance does not take a staff person if a well-trained job rep is available," he said.

Bailey concluded that "It (the grievance committee system) has and will continue, as it becomes more widely-known and used, to provide better lines of communication and increase direct OSEA involvement through the grievance procedure."

Job rep helps self

Sometimes an OSEA job representative has to file a grievance on his or her own behalf. Such was the case with Mary Muni, a job rep and a counselor at the School for the Blind.

She charged the school with sex discrimination and with violating the contract for requiring her to take a weekend shift solely because she is a woman. The specific contract violation dealt with her right to choose her shift based on seniority.

After her grievance was filed she was told that the school's counselors would have an opportunity to bid on shifts based on seniority as per the agency contract.

100 per cent membership certified

Several more work units have hit 100 per cent membership, reports Membership Relations Committee chairman Sandi Adams.

Within the Department of Education, those with 100 per cent OSEA membership are Vocational School Licensing Unit, the physical plant, staff support, publications unit, legal services unit, student services unit and auxiliary services unit.

At the State Accident Insurance Fund (SAIF), productions control, second floor scope operators, medical-only department, initial claims processing unit and SAIF nurses all have 100 per cent membership.

At the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, the program evaluation and statistics unit and ADP have 100 per cent membership.

When your work unit -- any work unit -- has 100 per cent membership, contact Sandi Adams for your certificate.

Psych aide wins back promotion

Blanche Shadle, a psychiatric aide at Fairview Hospital, was disciplined for not supervising her supervisor.

Shadle was promoted to psychiatric aide 2, a charge aide, at Fairview. However, during her trial service in that position she was told she would be removed from trial service for that position.

When Shadle became aware of patient abuse by employes in her charge, she reported this to her supervisor. However, because she did not check to see that her supervisor had followed through she was demoted.

When she was removed from trial service, she contacted OSEA Job Representative Chester Vaughn for help filing a grievance.

As a result of the grievance, in which she and Vaughn had the assistance of OSEA Employee Representative Gil Polanski, a trial service performance appraisal she had received was rewritten to show that she had contacted her supervisor regarding patient abuse and she was reinstated as a psychiatric aide 2.

Allowance vouchers may be resubmitted

Any employe of the state Department of Transportation who has been refused payment of mileage, per diem or some other subsistence allowance since July 1977 should resubmit that claim, says OSEA Special Assistant Angelo Stephenson.

Recent grievance settlements and other discussions have led to agreement between OSEA and management on the interpretation of these articles, he said.

If any of the resubmitted claims are refused again, contact OSEA immediately.